



AFFPC AUSTRALIAN
FEMINIST FOREIGN
POLICY COALITION

Advancing Feminist Foreign Policy in Australia

AUSTRALIAN FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY COALITION

Welcome to the July newsletter of the Australian Feminist Foreign Policy Coalition!

Thank you for joining this growing community advancing feminist foreign policy (FFP) in Australia.

In this bi-monthly newsletter, we will share updates from the Australian Feminist Foreign Policy Coalition (AFFPC) and the global feminist foreign policy space.

Please direct all enquiries, feedback, and suggestions to Liz Gill-Atkinson at research@iwda.org.au.

FOCUS:

Senator Penny Wong's first two months as Foreign Minister

On 21 May, Australia elected a new government, and Senator Penny Wong became the first person of colour to hold the position of Foreign Minister in a historically diverse parliament (although diversity in Australian politics still lags far behind the rest of society).

IWDA and members of the Australian Feminist Foreign Policy Coalition met with Senator Wong in March to discuss the interconnections between feminist foreign policy and Indigenous foreign policy approaches, the importance of feminist climate diplomacy and opportunities for a feminist approach to the Indo-Pacific region.

In her first two months in the role, Senator Wong has travelled extensively, visiting 10 countries across the Pacific and South East Asia, including second trips to Fiji (for the Pacific Island Forum Leaders' meeting) and Indonesia (for the G20 Foreign Minister's meeting).

Through these early engagements we've seen promising signs of alignment to a feminist foreign policy approach, with a focus on listening and building relationships with the region. Particularly in the Pacific that has included affirmation of commitments on climate action. In addition to meeting with political leaders, many prominent women's rights activists have been invited to meet with the Minister and share their priorities for Australia's engagement.

In Malaysia, Senator Wong spoke about her early years growing up in Kota Kinabalu and her father's story of coming to Australia to study, bringing a personal connection to the diplomatic ties between the countries. First Nations justice has also been a prominent theme in all her speeches and discussions, with the Government's commitment to implementing the Uluru Statement from the Heart and develop a First Nations Foreign Policy presented as key priorities.

The commitment to a First Nations Foreign Policy is significant, and must be back by genuine action on First Nations issues in Australia and our region. AFFPC members have explored the potential for a feminist foreign policy framework to strengthen implementation of this commitment, a topic which we hope to explore further in coming months. IWDA & the AFFPC will also continue our engagement across the political spectrum in Australia, including with the Coalition and the Greens.

June AFFPC Issues Paper

Gendering the Indo-Pacific Dialogue: Opportunities for Australia

The Indo-Pacific has grown in significance to become a foreign policy priority for both Australia and India. In their June paper, AFFPC allies Priyanka Bhide and Aditi Mukund (Kuberbnein Initiative, India) explore opportunities for 'Gendering the Indo-Pacific

July AFFPC Issues Paper

WPS in Afghanistan: Betrayal and Renewal

Since the Taliban took over Afghanistan in August, the rights and security of women and girls across the country have been rolled back. In their July paper 'WPS in Afghanistan: Betrayal and Renewal' AFFPC members, Farkhondeh Akbari and Jacqui True (Monash

dialogue' and recommend avenues for where Australia and India could deepen bilateral relations and work together to strengthen an inclusionary/gender lens in their foreign policy, including through a feminist foreign policy approach

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Panel Discussion

Perspectives on Gender Mainstreaming in Foreign Policy in the Indo-Pacific

AFFPC members Elise Stephenson and Maria Tanyang were joined by Soumita Basu in this panel discussion about the objectives and universality of the Feminist Foreign Policy concept. The panelists discussed intersections between FFP and WPS agendas, the importance of representative, inclusive, intersectional and bottom-up approaches to foreign policy-making and how the effectiveness of FFP might be measured. The webinar was held in collaboration between La Trobe Asia, 9DASHLINE and Kubernein Initiative. The video recording is available [here](#).

WATCH

Monash GPS Workshop

Global Rise of Extremism: Where is Gender?

In this upcoming workshop the Monash GPS Centre will bring together academics to present original research on understanding extremisms

GPS Centre) consider how a FFP approach can strengthen future strategies and engagement, including the Women Peace and Security agenda designed to address gender-inequality in Afghanistan.

Issues papers are published monthly on the AFFPC webpage.

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July AFFPC Issues Paper

Beyond women in diplomacy: The potential of a feminist foreign policy for Australia

At the recent Australian National University conference 'Gender & Cultural Diversity in Politics: Australia, Asia & the Pacific' the AFFPC convened a panel presentation that showcased the AFFPC Issues papers series and discussed the research to action, approach that influenced the coalition's advocacy strategies. Speakers included issues paper authors Julie Ballangarry (Griffith University), Farkhondeh (Faroo) Akbari (Monash University), Maria Tanyang (Australian National University), Alice Ridge (IWDA), and Liz Gill-Atkinson (IWDA).

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Development Intelligence Lab

What does the overturn of Roe v. Wade mean for international development?

Gender equality, Planned Parenthood and women's health have always been central to international development programs. In this

and their impacts from a gender perspective. The call for papers is now open, due by July 31st. Further information can be found on the [Monash GPS website](#).

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issue of The Intel, AFFPC member Maddie Flint unpacks the implications of what the decision means for U.S. funded development and communities in majority world countries.

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Broad Agenda

Towards a feminist First Nations foreign policy



The significant overlaps between First Nations and Feminist Foreign Policy approaches are not unknown. Indeed, many (including the AFFPC) argue that an Australian FFP would necessitate the full integration of First Nations peoples, policies and values. In their article, AFFPC members James Blackwell and Elise Stephenson examine the overlaps between these policy approaches, and argue for the transformative potential of an explicitly labelled (Feminist) First Nations Foreign Policy.

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The Canberra Times

Labor's First Nations Policy looks like real, substantive change



In this article, coalition member James Blackwell outlines the value of a First Nations foreign policy which builds on the lessons learned from tens of thousands of years of inter-polity relations, and which is grounded in First Nations' "unique law, culture, history". He argues that we need to go beyond rhetoric and incremental change and makes practical recommendations for Australia's approach based first and foremost, on listening to first nations people.

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Development Intelligence Lab

Is 'Fortress Australia' inherently secure

The fortress mindset that has, until recently, dominated foreign policy approaches, has not necessarily positioned Australia well to meet new security challenges. In this issues of The Intel, AFFPC convenor Alice Ridge argues that

Shaping a Shared Future: Southeast Asia and the Pacific

In this AP4D report, that outlines a vision for what an integrated approach to foreign policy looks like in practice for Australia in Southeast Asia and the Pacific, feminist foreign policy is noted as a worthy approach for consideration

a FFP approach would enable us to treat power as something we can grow, changing the calculus of how to best act on Australia's interests in the world.

to advance gender-equality in our region.

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AFA Weekly

AFA weekly with Grant Wyeth

In his analysis of foreign policy advances made by the new Government, AFFPC member Grant Wyeth notes the similarities between Australia's approach to foreign policy and a FFP approach, including the advancement of gender equality and the promotion of women's political leadership.

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What we're reading (and watching and listening):

A short list of books, articles, resources, videos and podcasts about feminist foreign policy



'Nurturing the Va' - Analysis and reflection by 'Ofa-Ki-Levuka Guttenbeil-

Likiliki:

In recent articles for [The Interpreter](#) and [The Canberra Times](#), 'Ofa-Ki-Levuka Guttenbeil-Likiliki, an Oceanic feminist researcher reflects on Senator Penny Wong's recent visits to Pacific countries. She notes the importance of nurturing relationships to break down unequal power dynamics – especially when working to advance women's rights. Whilst she believes that Senator Penny Wong wants this, Ofa highlights that alone, this is insufficient, unless it is part of a paradigm shift *“from unequal colonial practices to one that places power and reimagining, co-design, co-creation, co-responsibility and co-accountability in both Australia and the Oceanic Pacific's hands.”*

READ

Rethinking Investment in Gender Equality Is Key To Achieving Feminist Foreign Policy

The Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated gender inequality and highlighted the transformative potential of women's political leadership. In this session from the 2022 Raisina Dialogue, Ambika Vishwanath (Kubernein Initiative) discusses whether principles of government and machinery of government have evolved to respond to these changes. With other panelists, Ambika considers whether and how a non-patriarchal approach can democratise international relations and why investing in a new cadre of proponents of feminist foreign policy is important.

WATCH



In the Shadow of NATO Application: Sweden's Feminist Foreign Policy:

Why did Sweden, the pioneer of the concept of feminist foreign policy, apply for NATO membership? Doesn't that contradict the policy in question? In this interview, the founder of Sweden's first feminist online news magazine, Feminist Perspektiv, Anna Clara-Bratt reviews Sweden's application for NATO membership and its feminist foreign policy in an interview with Selay Dalaklı from [Bianet](#).

[READ](#)

Feminist foreign policy and Ukraine: For now, Japan leads the way

By applying a FFP lens, Hannah Cole, Maryruth Belsey-Priebe, and Tevvi Bullock from the Pacific Forum consider how Russia's invasion of Ukraine has influenced Indo-Pacific foreign policies, particularly aid, defense, diplomacy, trade, and immigration. The authors argue that Japan stands out as demonstrating alignment with some FFP principles, and may be ripe for formal FFP adoption. Given other Asian states' mixed responses, however, the invasion of Ukraine may split the Indo-Pacific on this framework.

[READ](#)

The Australian Feminist Foreign Policy Coalition acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work and live. We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present, and the Aboriginal Elders of other communities.

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